

## News Release

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### Wisconsin receives \$2 million grant to improve career pathways

*JPMorgan Chase and CCSSO announce Wisconsin to receive grant aimed at connecting students with skills-based education opportunities*

MADISON — A \$2 million New Skills for Youth grant announced today at a press conference in Beaver Dam will strengthen and expand career-education opportunities for Wisconsin students. The state is one of 10 grant recipients announced by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and JPMorgan Chase.

The three-year grant will allow Wisconsin to build on existing efforts in the state's 16 technical college regions to connect student interests and workforce needs. Grant funding will support the new Regional Career Pathways Project, which will draw on CEO Champions within four pilot regions to connect workforce-relevant education and training to local industry needs. This will give students the ability to see where professional opportunities exist and allow the business community to share their future employment needs.

“Connecting educational experiences to the workplace has been one of my biggest priorities for Wisconsin schools,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers. “This grant gives us a chance to bring our education partners together with private sector businesses to build a structure that will benefit kids in whatever profession they choose. I want to thank JPMorgan Chase and our Wisconsin planning partners for their work to make this a reality.”

“As we move forward, one of the things we want to focus on is ensuring the next generation of Wisconsin workers possess the practical skills and knowledge they need to thrive in their careers,” said Gov. Scott Walker. “The New Skills for Youth grant helps jump start this process by helping students think about, plan for, and implement a strategy to reach their career goals at an early age. Thanks to the Council of Chief State School Officers and JPMorgan Chase & Co. for this opportunity.”

Wisconsin's plan was developed in conjunction with the Apache Stainless Equipment Corporation in Beaver Dam; Boys and Girls Club of Milwaukee; CESA Statewide Network; Jim Morgan; JPMorgan Chase & Co.; Madison Metropolitan School District; Mayor Tom Barrett; Milwaukee 7; Milwaukee Public Schools; New Berlin School District; Nexen Group Inc., with a manufacturing facility in Webster; OEM Fabricators Inc., with facilities in Woodville, Neillsville, and Phillips; Office of the Governor; University of Wisconsin System; Wisconsin

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Association of Independent Colleges and Universities; Wisconsin Center for Education Research; Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development; Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce; Wisconsin Technical College System; and Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

The review process examined plans from Phase I grant recipients. Wisconsin was among 24 states and the District of Columbia that received \$100,000 Phase I grants, which the state used for planning and early implementation of long-term career readiness education programs that align with the needs of Wisconsin employers.

“Our grant will help the state of Wisconsin’s innovative Regional Career Pathways Project to drive workforce-relevant education and training aligned to local needs,” said Michelle Williams, executive director, JPMorgan Chase. “We cannot afford to have students leave high school without being prepared for college or a career in a local growth industry. Wisconsin’s use of career readiness to reduce gender, racial, and socioeconomic achievement gaps aligns with our goal of providing our youth with pathways to economic success.”

“It is great news that Wisconsin was selected to receive this New Skills for Youth grant,” said Kurt R. Bauer, WMC president and CEO. “The skilled worker shortage in Wisconsin is daunting, but programs like this will play a crucial role in better preparing students for the countless careers available in manufacturing and other sectors in our state. Policymakers and the business community alike must keep the focus on highlighting the rewarding careers available in Wisconsin if we are truly going to eliminate the skills gap.”

“We’ve had a lot of success with grant applications, but this one is truly exciting,” said Morna K. Foy, president of the Wisconsin Technical College System. “JPMorgan Chase recognized a thriving public-private partnership and the strategic value to Wisconsin of its work to support student success and advance the state’s economy.”

“Our agency is committed to advancing training opportunities that help Wisconsin youth enter the workforce with in-demand skills,” said Department of Workforce Development Secretary Ray Allen. “We look forward to strengthening partnerships with the Department of Public Instruction and regional stakeholders to increase career pathway collaborations through the New Skills for Youth initiative.”

In March 2016, JPMorgan Chase and CCSSO announced \$100,000 grants for Phase I of the New Skills for Youth initiative. The three-year grant awarded to Wisconsin today represents the second phase of the New Skills for Youth initiative, which is providing 10 of the original 24 recipients with funding to execute the career-readiness plans they developed during the first phase.

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**NOTES:** More information about the [New Skills For Youth initiative](http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/New_Skills_for_Youth.html) is available on the CCSSO website [http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/New\\_Skills\\_for\\_Youth.html](http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Programs/New_Skills_for_Youth.html). This news release is available electronically at [http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2017\\_04.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2017_04.pdf).